RESULTS OF COMMUNITY SURVEY ASSESSING PERCEPTIONS AND FREQUENCY OF DISCRIMINATION INCIDENTS

April 2010



I. Background

The West Lafayette Human Relations Commission (WLHRC) was established in 1968 to foster respect, understanding, and fairness in our community. Members of the WLHRC are appointed by the Mayor to serve, without pay, to provide equal opportunity to residents and visitors and to investigate and resolve complaints of discrimination. In 2009, we conducted a survey to assess the needs of the community and better serve our citizens. The objectives of the survey were to:

- 1. Gain a better understanding of the community's perception of discrimination and determine to what extent it is viewed as a problem.
- 2. Determine how frequently incidents of discrimination occur in West Lafayette and which types of discrimination occur most often.
- 3. Assess public awareness of the existence of the WLHRC and its procedures and determines what obstacles exists to reporting incidents of discrimination to the Commission.

We consulted with Statistics in the Community (StatCom), a volunteer organization of Purdue University statistics students, to assist in the development and distribution of the survey. The survey was mailed to 2,500 randomly-selected households in West Lafayette, and was made available in Spanish as well as English. Printing and distribution were funded by the West Lafayette Mayor's Office. All sorting, handling, data entry and analysis was provided through volunteer resources.

II. Analysis

The response to the survey was overwhelmingly positive. 24% of the surveys were completed and returned, representing 597 households. These responses came from residents from many backgrounds, closely matching the demographics of the City of West Lafayette. The response rate indicates a high level of community interest in this issue.

A large majority of residents (79%) indicated an awareness of the problem of discrimination, and 28% identified a specific incident of discrimination that they experienced. However, only 14% described discrimination as a "significant" or "very significant" problem in West Lafayette. While we continue working to decrease the frequency of these incidents, we believe that it is a positive reflection on West Lafayette that so many recognize the problem. This is an issue that exists in every community and is best addressed when residents are aware of it.

Of those who experienced discrimination, either directly or indirectly, racial discrimination was described as the most common (41%), followed by discrimination on the basis of age (10.5%), sexual orientation (10%), and citizenship or visa status (8%).

The majority of respondents (62%) said they would consider reporting an incident of discrimination that happened to them or someone they knew, but only 36% were aware that West Lafayette has a Human Relations Commission that is empowered to address these incidents. Awareness was particularly low among certain demographic groups, including Hispanics and Latinos (7% awareness), people of Middle Eastern descent (14% awareness), people of Asian descent (16%),

and people earning less than \$25,000 per year (19%) While many said that they were unsure who they could go to with a complaint of discrimination, some reported other obstacles to filing a complaint, including fear of creating further problems for themselves (11%).

III. Recommendations

The WLHRC is a resource available to everybody in our community. No resident or visitor who wishes to exercise his or her right to file a complaint should fear doing so. It is our goal that all residents of and visitors to West Lafayette be aware of the options available to them and know how to go about filing a complaint if they wish to do so. Furthermore, we aim to make the process as simple and convenient as possible. To that end, we recommend the following actions.

To address the lack of awareness of the Commission:

- Implement a communication plan that includes a public announcement of these survey results and discusses the services provided by the WLHRC; pursue further outreach to local news and media outlets to help get the word out.
- Make a special effort to reach groups that reported less awareness of the Commission by targeting community organizations and cultural institutions which serve their specific needs (example: the Latino Coalition, local Mosques and other places of worship, etc.)
- Update the WLHRC Brochure, make copies available in city buildings, university offices, local businesses, & other relevant locations, and develop a plan to restock brochures when necessary.

To address the reported fear of filing a complaint:

- In communication efforts previously described, emphasize that is unlawful for any person to retaliate or discriminate against a person for filing a complaint, acting as a witness, or assisting the Commission in an investigation.
- Establish ways to educate interested residents and visitors on the Commission's complaint resolution procedures in greater detail to make them more comfortable with filing a complaint.
- Educate residents and visitors on the mediation options included in the complaint process to reduce confrontation in resolving complaints.

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STATCOM Report on West Lafayette Human Relations Commission Survey

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Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Data Summary	2
Analysis Results	4
Q1: How common is the occurrence of prejudice and discrimination in the community, and is it perceived to be a problem?	4
Q2: Which types of discrimination are more common and which are less common?	5
Q3: What is the level of awareness of the Human Relations Commission in the community? Do most people know that the Human Relations Commission (HRC) exists?	5
Q4: Among those who say they have experienced or witnessed an incident of discrimination, was the incident reported to the HRC? If it was not reported, why not?	8
Q5: What are the major obstacles to reporting incidents?	3
Q6: What is the relation between the demographic information and whether discrimination was experienced?	9
Q7: What is the relation between the demographic information and whether aware of WL Human Resource Commission?	1
Summary and Conclusions	3
Appendix14	4
Summary of other questions in the survey	4
Demographic information	5
Respondent's Survey	7

Introduction

Statistics in Community (StatCom) is a volunteer student-run organization in the department of statistics at Purdue University. It provides free statistical consulting services to governmental and nonprofit groups around Lafayette area.

In 2008, StatCom was contacted by Human Relations Commission in West Lafayette to help them design a survey to assess the discrimination situation in the West Lafayette area. The client randomly distributed the survey to residences in the West Lafayette area. Of these households, 597 completed and returned the survey.

The purpose of this survey is to answer several questions related to discrimination such as whether residents are aware of discrimination and whether residents understand they can report to the Human Relations Commission if they encounter discrimination.

Data Summary

Tables 1-4 and Figure 1 show that among the 597 survey takers, a large number of them are females (60.13%), well-educated (49.3% received graduate or professional degrees), middle class (61.31% earn more than \$50,000 in annual income), or white (80.1%).

Table1. Gender (count and percent)

Category	Frequency	Percent
Male	220	36.85%
Female	359	60.13%
no response	18	3.02%

Table2. Education Level (count and percent)

Category	Frequency	Percent
Some or no high school	3	0.50%
High school diploma or GED	64	10.72%
Associate/technical college degree	38	6.37%
Bachelors degree	178	29.82%
Graduate school or professional degree	294	49.25%
no response	20	3.35%

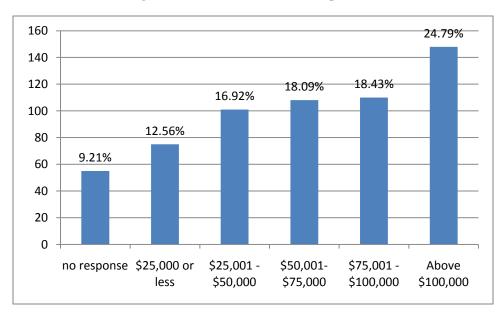
Table3. Age Groups (count and percent)

Category	Frequency	Percent
Younger than 20 years	1	0.17%
20-34 years	93	15.58%
35-49 years	147	24.62%
50-64 years	177	29.65%
65 years or older	168	28.14%
no response	11	1.84%

Table4. Ethnic Groups (count and percent)

Category	Frequency	Percent
American Indian/Alaskan Native	3	0.50%
Asian or Pacific Islander	43	7.20%
Black/African descent	8	1.34%
Hispanic/Latino(a)	14	2.35%
Middle Eastern descent	7	1.17%
White/European descent	478	80.07%
Other	19	3.18%
no response	14	2.35%

Figure 1. Income Levels (count and percent)



Analysis Results

There are five questions that the client wants to answer based on the information from the analysis of the survey.

Q1: How common is the occurrence of prejudice and discrimination in the community, and is it perceived to be a problem?

Table7 shows that 28.31% of the people polled have seen discrimination first hand while table5 shows that 47.91% of them believe it is a problem in West Lafayette (including those who think it is very significant problem, significant problem or minor problem). Also, there is a poor relationship between the number who have seen discrimination first hand and how often they believe it occurs.

Table5. How significant of a problem do you consider discrimination to be in WL

Category	Frequency	Percent
Very Significant Problem	21	3.52%
Significant Problem	66	11.06%
Minor Problem	199	33.33%
Not much of a problem	186	31.16%
Not a problem	106	17.76%
No response	19	3.18%

Table6. How often do you think discrimination occurs in WL

Category	Frequency	Percent
Very Often	20	3.35%
Often	70	11.73%
Occasionally	264	44.22%
Rarely	144	24.12%
Very Rarely	83	13.90%
No response	16	2.68%

Table7. Have you or someone you know experienced discrimination in WL

Category	Frequency	Percent
Yes	169	28.31%
No	401	67.17%
no response	27	4.52%

Q2: Which types of discrimination are more common and which are less common?

Table8 shows that most of these people believe that Race or Ethnicity is the biggest reason that discrimination occurs. They also believe that sexual orientation, citizenship or visa status, and age are some other major reasons for discrimination. Table9 shows that based on those who have seen discrimination first hand, their beliefs are right. Race or ethnicity is the biggest contributor to discrimination; 41% of the respondents have seen racial discrimination. About 10% of discrimination cases were based on age and about 10% were based on sexual orientation. Perhaps they answered their beliefs on what they knew has occurred in West Lafayette. For both questions, gender and physical or mental disability were shown to be two types of discrimination that were less common.

Table8. Discrimination based on which one do you think is the most common in WL

Category	Frequency	Percent
Age	40	6.70%
Sex	14	2.35%
Race or ethnicity	251	42.04%
Sexual Orientation	50	8.38%
Familial Status	21	3.52%
Physical or mental disability	22	3.69%
Citizenship or visa status	47	7.87%
Other	58	9.72%
No response	77	12.90%

Table9. Which one was the basis of the most recent incident of discrimination

Category	Frequency	Percent
Age	17	10.49%
Sex	8	4.94%
Race or ethnicity	67	41.36%
Sexual Orientation	16	9.88%
Familial Status	9	5.56%
Physical or mental disability	6	3.70%
Citizenship or visa status	10	6.17%
Public assistance status	4	2.47%
Don't know	4	2.47%
Other	13	8.02%

Q3: What is the level of awareness of the Human Relations Commission in the community? Do most people know that the Human Relations Commission (HRC) exists?

Table 10 shows that about a third of the people polled were aware of the HRC before the survey. Table 11 shows after the survey was completed about 88% of them knew that both visitors to and residents of West Lafayette can file a discrimination complaint with the commission. Table 13 shows that of those who have previously filed a complaint, only 5.56% of them did so with the HRC. Table 12 shows about 25% of them said they would file a discrimination complaint with the HRC.

Table 10. Were you previously aware that WL has a commission to address issues of discrimination

Category	Frequency	Percent
Yes	216	36.18%
No	368	61.64%
no response	13	2.18%

Table 11. Who can file a discrimination complaint with the WL HRC

Category	Frequency	Percent
Only residents of West Lafayette	49	8.21%
Both visitors to and residents of West Lafayette	526	88.11%
no response	22	3.69%

Table 12. To whom would you report the discrimination incident

Category	Frequency	Percent
Police	103	17.25%
Supervisor at a place of business	163	27.30%
West Lafayette HRC	148	24.79%
Indiana state government	9	1.51%
other	51	8.54%
no response	50	8.38%

Table 13. If any incident was reported, to whom was it reported

Category	Frequency	Percent
Police	5	13.89%
Supervisor at a place of business	14	38.89%
West Lafayette HRC	2	5.56%
West Lafayette city government	1	2.78%
Indiana state government	0	0.00%
don't know	5	13.89%
other	9	25.00%

Q4: Among those who say they have experienced or witnessed an incident of discrimination, was the incident reported to the HRC? If it was not reported, why not? There were 169 incidents of discrimination, of which 28 were reported. Two of the reported 28 cases were in fact reported to the HRC.

As far as why an incident of discrimination was not reported, from previous questions we have the following information: 13% of them said they would not know who to report the incident to even after the survey and receiving information about the HRC. Another common response is that they would be afraid that reporting the incident would create additional problems.

Additional Comments: Of the 169 people who experienced or observed discrimination, 120 of them were previously unaware of the HRC. Moreover, of the 48 people who had experienced discrimination and were previously aware of the HRC, 2 of them reported the discrimination to the HRC (there was a blank response).

Of the 48 people that had experience discrimination and were previously aware of the HRC, 16 of them said they would "probably not" or definitely not report discrimination if it were to happen. Their reasons were as follows:

- 5 said they were afraid
- 1 said they would not know to whom to report the incident,
- 1 said they did not want to be further reminded of the incident of discrimination,
- 8 said other reasons
- 1 did not answer.

Even though they knew about the HRC, 1 of these 16 people still did not know to whom to report the discrimination. The most common response was that they were afraid it would create additional problems.

Q5: What are the major obstacles to reporting incidents?

Of the people that responded to 4B, we have the following situation:

Table 14. Main reason that they would not report

Category	Frequency	Percent
I wouldn't know who to report it to.	76	12.73%
don't want to be further reminded of the incident	26	4.36%
afraid reporting would create additional problems	67	11.22%
Other	53	8.88%
No response	375	62.81%

The main reasons that people would not report cases of discrimination is an ignorance in regard to whom to report the discrimination to and a fear of causing additional problems.

Of the people that did not report discrimination occurrences (does not include people that left this blank or did not know if the occurrence was reported), 30 of the 113 people knew about the HRC. Of these 113 people:

- 56 said they would **probably not** report discrimination
- 27 said they **maybe would** report discrimination
- 11 said they **definitely would** report discrimination
- 11 said they **probably would** report discrimination, and
- 6 said they would **definitely not** report discrimination

This indicates that a majority of the people that neglected to report an incident of discrimination had no intention of ever reporting the incident of discrimination.

Of the people that did not report an occurrence of discrimination:

Table 15. Main reason that they did not report

Category	Frequency	Percent
No Reponse	67	47.52%
Afraid reporting would create more problems	32	22.70%
Did not know who to report it to	20	14.18%
Other	17	12.06%
Did not want to be further reminded of it	5	3.55%

This table reinforces the data gathered from all participants in the previous paragraph. Chiefly, of the people that answered, the main reasons for not reporting an incident were that they were afraid of creating additional problems and they did not know to whom to report an incident.

Q6: What is the relation between the demographic information and whether discrimination was experienced?

Of the people that replied "yes" to 6, we have the following situation:

Table 16. The education level of people who experienced discrimination

	Frequency	Percent	% of Group
Associate/technical college degree	12	7.27%	31.58%
Bachelors Degree	44	26.67%	24.72%
Graduate School or professional degree	97	58.79%	32.99%
High School Diploma or GED	12	7.27%	18.75%
Some or no high school	0	0.00%	0.00%
no response	0	0.00%	0.00%

Of the people that did take the survey and answered question6, for each education group

- 32.99% with graduate school or professional degree claimed "yes"
- 31.58% with associate or technical college degree claimed "yes"
- 24.72% with **bachelors degree** claimed "yes" and
- 18.75% with **high school diploma or GED** claimed "yes"

This indicates that with higher education, people are more likely to experience or see discrimination. This could be because they are more aware of discrimination.

Table 17. The race or ethics of people who experienced discrimination

	Frequency	Percent	% of Group
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0	0.00%	0.00%
Asian or Pacific Islander	19	11.24%	44.19%
Black/African descent	7	4.14%	87.50%
Hispanic/Latino(a)	10	5.92%	71.43%
Middle Eastern descent	2	1.18%	28.57%
White/European descent	119	70.41%	24.90%
Multi-racial	6	3.55%	54.55%
Other	6	3.55%	31.58%

Of the people that did take the survey and answered question6, for each race group

- 87.5% black or African decent claimed "yes"
- 71.43% **Hispanic or Latino** claimed "yes"
- 54.55% multi-racial claimed "yes" and
- 44.19% **Asian or Pacific Islander** claimed "yes"
- 24.9% White or European decent claimed "yes"

This indicates that most people of black or African decent have experienced or have seen discrimination. Also most people of Hispanic or Latino decent have experienced or have seen discrimination.

Table 18. The salary of people who experienced discrimination

	Frequency	Percent	% of Group
\$25,000 or less	30	17.75%	40.00%
\$25,001 - \$50,000	28	16.57%	27.72%
\$50,001- \$75,000	34	20.12%	31.48%
\$75,001 - \$100,000	37	21.89%	33.64%
Above \$100,000	32	18.93%	21.62%

Of the people that did take the survey and answered question6, for each salary group

- 40% of people earned \$25,000 or less claimed "yes"
- 33.64% of people earned \$75,001-\$100,000 claimed "yes"
- 31.48% of people earned \$50,001-\$75,000 claimed "yes" and
- 27.72% of people earned \$25,000-\$50,000 claimed "yes"
- 21.62% of people earned above \$100,000 claimed "yes"

This suggests the extremes of the pay scale also represent the extremes of the discrimination. The lower end of the pay scale has experienced or has seen discrimination more than the upper end has.

Q7: What is the relation between the demographic information and whether aware of WL Human Resource Commission?

Table 19. The education level of people who experienced discrimination

	Frequency	Percent	% of Group
Associate/technical college degree	9	4.25%	23.68%
Bachelors Degree	57	26.89%	32.02%
Graduate School or professional degree	125	58.96%	42.52%
High School Diploma or GED	20	9.43%	31.25%

Of the people that did take the survey and answered question 10, for each education group

- 42.52% with graduate school or professional degree claimed "yes"
- 32.02% with associate or technical college degree claimed "yes"
- 31.25% with **bachelors degree** claimed "yes" and
- 23.68% with **high school diploma or GED** claimed "yes"

This indicates that with higher education, people are more likely to be aware of WL Human Resource Commission.

Table 20. The race or ethics of people who experienced discrimination

	Frequency	Percent	% of Group
American Indian/Alaskan Native	1	0.46%	33.33%
Asian or Pacific Islander	7	3.24%	16.28%
Black/African descent	3	1.39%	37.50%
Hispanic/Latino(a)	1	0.46%	7.14%
Middle Eastern descent	1	0.46%	14.29%
White/European descent	190	87.96%	39.75%
Multi-racial	4	1.85%	36.36%
Other	3	1.39%	15.79%

Of the people that did take the survey and answered question 10, for each race group

- 39.75% White or European decent claimed "yes"
- 37.5% black or African decent claimed "yes"
- 36.36% multi-racial claimed "yes" and

This indicates that more than one third of white/European decent, black/African decent and multi-racial claimed that they are aware of the WL Human Resource Commission. On the other hand, people of Hispanic, Middle Eastern, or Asian decent are less likely to be aware of the WL Human Resource Commission.

Table 21. The salary of people who experienced discrimination

	Frequency	Percent	% of Group
\$25,000 or less	14	6.48%	18.67%
\$25,001 - \$50,000	32	14.81%	31.68%
\$50,001- \$75,000	40	18.52%	37.04%
\$75,001 - \$100,000	46	21.30%	41.82%
Above \$100,000	59	27.31%	39.86%

Of the people that did take the survey and answered question6, for each salary group

- 41.82% of people earned \$75,001-\$100,000 \$25,000 or less claimed "yes"
- 39.86% of people earned **above \$100,000** claimed "yes"
- 37.04% of people earned \$50,001-\$75,000 claimed "yes" and
- 31.68% of people earned \$25,000-\$50,000 claimed "yes"
- 18.67% of people earned \$25,000 or less claimed "yes"

This indicates that people with higher salary are more aware of WL Human Resources Commission.

Summary and Conclusions

Our analysis indicates that half of the people think discrimination is a problem in West Lafayette. Most people believe and have observed racial discrimination to be the most prevalent type. Additionally, sexual orientation and age are common types, physical or mental disability and public assistance status are less common types. Before the survey, only about 1/3 of the population knew about the HRC. Only a small proportion of people reported discrimination and a much smaller proportion of people reported it to the HRC. Many people were previously unaware of the HRC, so they were incapable of reporting an incident to the HRC. A main reason for people not reporting an incident of discrimination to anyone is that they did not know to whom to report the incident and were afraid of causing further problems.

Appendix

Summary of other questions in the survey

Q4a: Most of the people (62.32%) would choose to report or would maybe report the discrimination based on the results from the survey. However, a large portion of people probably (31.83%) would not report.

Table 22 will report discrimination that happened to you or to someone you know

Category	Frequency	Percent
Definitely	85	14.24%
Probably	122	20.44%
Maybe	165	27.64%
Probably Not	190	31.83%
Definitely Not	17	2.85%
No response	18	3.02%

Q8: Among those who responded, most people (7.87%) said service or retail outlet is the place where most recent discrimination occurred. Other than that, employment and educational institution (6.20% and 5.86%) also represent the place where a large portion of the discrimination incidents occurred.

Table 23 where did the most recent discrimination happen

Category	Frequency	Percent
Employment	37	6.20%
City Services	15	2.51%
Educational Institution	35	5.86%
Service or retail outlet	47	7.87%
Don't know	8	1.34%
Other	29	4.86%
no response	426	71.36%

Q9A: Among the people who responded, most of them didn't report discrimination incidents. The reason is discussed in the above section.

Table 24 was the incident of discrimination reported

Category	Frequency	Percent
Yes	33	5.53%
No	120	20.10%
don't know	31	5.19%
no response	413	69.18%

Demographics information

Table 25. The education level of people who responded to the survey

Category	Frequency	Percent
Associate/technical colleg degree	38	6.37%
Bachelors Degree	178	29.82%
Graduate School or professional degree	294	49.25%
High School Diploma or GED	64	10.72%
Some or no high school	3	0.50%
no response	20	3.35%

Table 26. The race or ethics of people who responded to the survey

Category	Frequency	Percent
American Indian/Alaskan Native	3	0.50%
Asian or Pacific Islander	43	7.20%
Black/African descent	8	1.34%
Hispanic/Latino(a)	14	2.35%
Middle Eastern descent	7	1.17%
White/European descent	478	80.07%
Multi-racial	11	1.84%
Other	19	3.18%

Table 27. The salary of people who responded to the survey

Category	Frequency	Percent
\$25,000 or less	75	12.56%
\$25,001 - \$50,000	101	16.92%
\$50,001- \$75,000	108	18.09%
\$75,001 - \$100,000	110	18.43%
Above \$100,000	148	24.79%

Respondent's Survey

The West Lafayette Human Relations Commission has selected you to complete the following survey. Your response will help us determine whether discrimination is a problem in West Lafayette and identify the areas in which the community needs to improve in order to reduce discrimination in the future.

In this survey, please define <u>discrimination</u> to be a policy, practice, or attempted act made based on a person's group membership instead of on individual merit. Discrimination can lead to the unequal treatment or segregation of any person.

For each question, please select only **one** option by placing an X in the box next to the option that best describes your answer. Your answers are anonymous and confidential. Thank you for helping us with this study. Your input is greatly appreciated.

1.	Ho	w significant of a problem do you consider discrimination to be in West Lafayette?
		Very significant problem
		Significant problem
		Minor problem
		Not much of a problem
		Not a problem
2.	Ho	w often do you think discrimination occurs in West Lafayette?
		Very often
		Often
		Occasionally
		Rarely
		Very rarely
3.		crimination based on which \underline{one} of the following do you think is the most common in West fayette?
		Age
		Sex
		Race or ethnicity
		Religion
		Sexual orientation
		Familial status
		Physical or mental disability
		Citizenship or visa status
		Other (please specify):

4.		ou or someone you know were to experience discrimination, do you think that you would bort it?
		Definitely Probably Maybe Probably Not Definitely Not
		B. If you answered "Probably Not" or "Definitely Not", what is the main reason you think you wouldn't report the discrimination incident? Please select <u>one</u> .
		 □ I wouldn't know who to report it to. □ I probably wouldn't want to be further reminded of the incident. □ I would be afraid that reporting the incident would create additional problems. □ Other (please specify):
	•	ou were to report an incident of discrimination that had occurred in West Lafayette, to one person or group would you be most likely to report it?
		Police Supervisor at a place of business West Lafayette Human Relations Commission West Lafayette city government Indiana state government Other (please specify):
6. Have you or someone you know experienced discrimination in We		ve you or someone you know experienced discrimination in West Lafayette?
		Yes No (If not, please proceed to question 10)
7.	Wh	ich <u>one</u> of the following was the basis of the most recent incident of discrimination?
		Age Sex Race or ethnicity Religion Sexual orientation Familial status Physical or mental disability Citizenship or visa status Public assistance status (such as welfare status)
		Don't know Other (please specify):

8.	In v	which situation or location did the most recent incident of discrimination occur?
		Employment City Services Educational Institution Service or retail outlet Don't know Other (please specify):
9.	A. '	Was this incident of discrimination reported?
		Yes No Don't know
		B. If yes, to whom was the incident reported? Please select all that apply.
		 □ Police □ Supervisor at a place of business □ West Lafayette Human Relations Commission □ West Lafayette city government □ Indiana state government □ Don't know □ Other (please specify):
		ere you previously aware that the City of West Lafayette has a commission to address of discrimination?
		Yes No
11.		no do you think can file a discrimination complaint with the West Lafayette Human Relations mmission?
		Only residents of West Lafayette Both visitors to and residents of West Lafayette
12.	Wh	nat is your gender?
		Female Male

13. What is your highest level of education?		
	Some or no high school	
	High school diploma or GED	
	Associate/technical college degree	
	Bachelors degree	
	Graduate school or professional degree	
14. Wh	nat is your age?	
	Younger than 20 years	
	20-34 years	
	35-49 years	
	50-64 years	
	65 years or older	
15. Wh	nat is your race or ethnicity?	
	American Indian/Alaskan Native	
	Asian or Pacific Islander	
	Black/African descent	
	Hispanic/Latino(a)	
	Middle Eastern descent	
	White/European descent	
	Multi-racial	
	Other (please specify):	
16. Wh	nat is the annual income of your household?	
	\$25,000 or less	
	\$25,001 - \$50,000	
	\$50,001 - 75,000	
	\$75,001 – 100,000	
	Above \$100,000	
Thank	you for taking the time to complete this survey. If you have any additional comments or concerns	
about d	discrimination in West Lafayette, please include them below.	